



March 2013



Jodi Ross,
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Manager

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Annual Town Meeting
Saturday, March 23,
10 AM at the Abbot
School

Westford READS!
The Civil War
Page 2

Cameron Senior Center
Events
Page 4

Frisbee Spring Fling
'Lets Move Westford'
Page 5

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Dear Westford Residents,

Our annual town meeting will be held in the Abbot School Gymnasium on Saturday, March 23rd, beginning at 10:00 a.m. There are 28 articles on the warrant, which may be viewed on our website at the following link: [2013 Annual Town Meeting](#). By now you have received the Finance Committee's Report and Recommendations, which captured and illustrated so much information to help explain our town's finances. Many thanks to the members of this committee for their efforts in creating this incredibly informative document.

The Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee all voted to support the FY14 Town Manager's operating budget of \$98,436,379, which represents a 3.98% increase over FY13. This budget provides a slight increase in services in the schools, public safety, and permitting departments. In order to fund this year's budget requests, we were forced to use one-time revenue sources in order to avoid an operational override. There are several fiscal challenges and uncertainties as we enter FY14. Although we have seen some signs of economic improvement, including an increase in new growth and hotel and meals excise, there are continued pressures such as costly infrastructure and building maintenance needs, health insurance increases, pension costs, and collective bargaining agreements. We were able to fund over \$3.8 million in capital, through a combination of Community Preservation Act funds, "pay-as-you-go" operating funds, and bundling projects and bonding while interest rates are low.

We have been fortunate to receive a number of grants this year, which are enabling us to improve public transportation, study our town center parking and traffic patterns, assist us with establishing a storm water utility, increase student awareness of fire prevention, fund a diesel exhaust system at the Center Fire Station, conduct roof inspections, purchase safety stools, establish regional pet shelters for emergency evacuations, and to purchase food for seniors in need.

We continue to investigate avenues to save our precious financial resources. We are currently negotiating three power purchase agreements for net metering, which will result in long-term savings on our municipal utility bills. In the agreements, the town will purchase credits produced at solar farms in Hubbardston, Palmer, and other Massachusetts' communities, and apply these credits to our municipal National Grid electricity bills. This project alone is projected to save our town an average of \$400,000 per year over a 20-year period. We are also crafting an agreement between the schools and the water department, to transfer the operation of our 4 town-owned treatment plants to water personnel (with no charge to the water takers.) There is a lot to discuss at our town meeting this year, and therefore I urge all registered voters to attend.

I look forward to seeing you at town meeting.

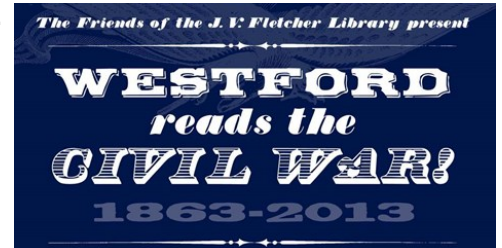
Sincerely,

Jodi Ross

J.V. Fletcher Library News

Westford READS!

The J. V. Fletcher Library is more than halfway through our four month long Community Reads Program, where every resident in town was/is invited to participate in reading the same two books and to take part in over 20 exciting programs and events, in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.



Our final two programs will *literally* bring the Civil War to life at the Library. On Saturday, April 20 at 3:00 PM, Jeff Lawrence and other Civil War Re-enactors will introduce Westfordians to the uniforms, weaponry and daily camp life of Massachusetts' Volunteer Infantries. Then on Sunday, April 28 at 3:00 PM Dr. Ira Spar (who is a member of The Society of Civil War Surgeons, Inc.) presents what daily life was like in a Civil War Hospital. Dr. Spar will detail how health care was delivered to the wounded and sick soldiers returning to Connecticut from the war. The audience will get to see amputation kits, cartes de visites, albumin prints and discuss Civil War munitions. Join us as Westford LIVES history!



[Westford READS!](#)
[QR code](#)

Thursday, March 21 st 7:00PM	HISTORICAL LECTURE WITH RICHARD HOWE Making Sense of the Civil War
Tuesday, March 26 th 7:00PM	DROP-IN BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP Confederates in the Attic by Tony Horwitz
Thursday, March 28 th 7:00PM	AUTHOR PROGRAM WITH HARRIET REISEN Louisa May Alcott: The Woman Behind Little Women
Thursday, April 4 th 3:00PM	YOUNG ADULT BOOK CLUB Chasing Lincoln's Killer
Tuesday, April 9 th 7:00PM	HISTORICAL LECTURE WITH JULIA GREENE The Abolitionists in Massachusetts
Tuesday, April 16 th 7:00 PM	CIVIL WAR CONCERT WITH ROGER TINCKNELL Songs of the Blue and Gray
Thursday, April 18 th 9:30AM Departure	HISTORICAL TRIP TO ORCHARD HOUSE Tour & Shop Orchard House in Concord
Thursday, April 18 th 7:00PM	DROP-IN BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP The Civil War Correspondence of the Jubb Brothers of Westford Massachusetts
Saturday, April 20 th 1:00PM	MILITIA RE-ENACTMENT WITH JEFF LAWRENCE Massachusetts 22 nd Volunteer Infantry
Sunday, April 28 th 3:00PM	HISTORICAL LECTURE WITH DR. IRA SPAR Life and Times in a Civil War Hospital

Cameron Senior Center News

Employees of Westford based Netscout recently hosted bingo night at the Cameron Center. They provided pizza, salad, desert, and bingo prizes. Thank you, Netscout!



Cameron Senior Center News (continued)

The Council on Aging and staff invite **YOU** to join us for an activity the week of **March 18 – 22nd!!!** Have you lived here for years and never visited your senior center? Are you new to Westford and curious about what we have to offer? Have you said to yourself, “I need to get over there and check it out?” Well now is your chance! We cordially invite you to come any day during open house week to observe or participate in our wonderful activities. We have all kinds of board and card games, exercise programs, art classes, a state of the art fitness room and hot lunches. The list below may stir your interest. We are always seeking new participants so come check out your lively facility at 20 Pleasant St., have some **refreshments**, and be entered into a **raffle drawing** for first time visitors or for someone who brings a friend. Come on down there is always a jigsaw puzzle in progress! Intro to computer classes are by request at the front desk. Additional offerings including a genealogy workshop are offered throughout the month. Local transportation available by calling 978 399-2322 with 2 days notice preferred. Most classes are 1 hour.

Monday

8:30 Bone Builders – observe
 8:30 – 3:30 Fitness Room – observe
 9:00 – 3:00 Cameron Closet
 9:30 Quilting Club
 10:00 Billiards
 11:30 Swedish meatballs must register by Thursday, please call, 978 692-5523
 12:00 Art Open Studio
 1:00 Busy Fingers (knitting, crocheting etc.)
 1:00 BINGO
 1:00 T'ai Chi
 1:00 Food Pantry - volunteer

Tuesday

8:15 Zumba
 8:30 – 3:30 Fitness Room – observe
 9:00 – 3:00 Cameron Closet
 9:00 Gentle Yoga
 10:00 Chair Movement
 10:15 Upbeats Music
 11:30 Baked Turkey Ham, must register by Friday, please call, 978 692-5523
 1:00 Bone Builders – observe
 1:00 Scrabble
 2:00 Line Dancing
 2:00 To Stay or Not to Stay in your home presented by Coldwell Banker Real Estate
 5:45 Poker

Friday

8:30 – 3:30 Fitness Room - observe
 8:30 Aerobics
 9:00 Music Makers
 9:00 – 3:00 Cameron Closet
 11:30 Salmon Boat must register by, Wednesday 978 692-5523
 12:30 Bridge

Wednesday

8:30 – 3:30 Fitness Room - observe
 8:30 Food Pantry - volunteer
 9:00 Aerobics
 9:00 – 3:00 Cameron Closet
 9:15 Art with Stella
 9:30 Bone Builders - observe
 10:00 Billiards
 11:30 Potato Crunch Fish, must register by Monday, 978-692-5523
 1:00 Busy Fingers (knitting, crocheting etc.)
 1:00 Cribbage
 1:00 Mah Jongg
 1:30 Gentle Yoga

Thursday

8:00 Veteran's Service Officer
 8:30 – 3:30 Fitness Room – observe
 8:30 Food Pantry – volunteer
 9:00 Zumba
 9:00 – 3:00 Cameron Closet
 10:00 Chair Movement
 11:30 Meatloaf with gravy must register by Tuesday 978 692-5523
 1:00 Bone Builders – observe
 1:00 Canasta
 6:00 Food Pantry - volunteer
 7:00 BINGO



Health Department News

FRISBEE SPRING FLING

Westford Health Department, partnering with Lowell General Hospital and Sustainable Westford's Healthy Kids Coalition, would like to invite the community to a special 'Let's Move Westford' event this spring. This event is open to the public and appropriate for families with children in grades K-8. Tickets can be reserved in advance by contacting Heidi Tierney at intothewoods3@comcast.net or purchased at the door.

Todd Brodeur, a two-time world freestyle frisbee champion, educates families about the importance of living a healthy, active life while demonstrating lots of exciting flying disc tricks, catches and combinations. Todd will show off his extensive Frisbee collection while sharing his knowledge about the origins of the flying disc and then lead a fun, interactive frisbee playshop for kids of all ages. Todd's demonstration includes lots of audience participation as well as time for Q&A, photos, and autograph signing. Check out Todd and his amazing tricks at (<http://www.toddbrodeur.com/>)

Date: March 21
Time: 6:30 p.m.-7:45 p.m.
Location: Stony Brook Middle School Gym
Cost: \$5 per person/\$15 family maximum

Proceeds will benefit the 'Chefs Move to Schools' Initiative that is ongoing in the Westford Public Schools this year.

Check out <http://www.letsmove.gov/chefs-move-schools> for more information about this exciting program.



Health Department News (continued)

Repair or Replacement of Failed Cesspool or Septic System Credit (Title V)

Any owner of residential property located in Massachusetts who is not a dependent of another taxpayer and who occupies the property as his or her principal residence is allowed a credit for the expenses incurred to:

Repair or replace a failed cesspool or septic system in compliance with the sewer system requirements of the State Environmental Code Title V as promulgated in 310 CMR 15.000 et seq., by the Department of Environmental Protection in 1995; or connect to a municipal sewer systems pursuant to a federal court order, administrative consent order, state court order, consent decree, or similar mandate.

Qualified expenses incurred to bring a failed system into full compliance may include one or more of the following:

- an upgraded system;
- an alternative system;
- a shared system; or
- a connector to a sewer system.

In order to qualify for the credit:

1. The amount of credit in the aggregate cannot exceed \$6,000 but maximum amount of credit claimed in any tax year cannot exceed \$1,500. The computation of the credit is 40 percent (.40) of available actual costs, not to exceed \$15,000 ($\$15,000 \times .40 = \$6,000$);
2. In the computation of the credit, any interest subsidy received from the Commonwealth must be subtracted;
3. The credit may be claimed beginning in the tax year in which the repair or replacement work is completed; and
4. The owner completes Massachusetts Schedule SC and encloses it with the tax return.

Carryover of the credit:

If the credit exceeds the tax due, the excess credit may be carried forward for up to five succeeding tax years.

If a taxpayer voluntarily repairs or replaces a cesspool or septic tank, this credit is not available since it is not considered a "failed" system under Title V.

Nonresidents do not qualify for this credit since the property must be an owner occupied principal residence located in Massachusetts. However, former Massachusetts residents who are required to file Massachusetts nonresident returns may claim their unused prior year credit carryovers.

Part-year residents qualify for the full credit if the property is an owner occupied principal residence.

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Recreation Department News

Westford Partnership for Children After School Enrichment Program at the Nabnasset School offers a Living Lab activity to enrich the children's lives and enable them to give something back to the children and staff at the school. The children explore the life cycles of various animals and plants. In March our Goldfish and Sea Monkeys arrived and are thriving under the children's care. Soon the children will grow plants from seeds to take home and also plant outside in the Living Lab at the school.



*Spring scenes from the 'Nab Lab.'
A hands on environmental learning area located in the Nabnasset School Court yard.*

For more information on this program and others, please visit our website: www.westfordrec.com.

Westford- Littleton Community Crew World Record Holders



Amelia Shein and Ben Davis of Westford - Littleton Community Crew broke the world record for the longest continual row on a Concept 2 erg-o-meter (indoor rowing machine) in the U19 heavy weight (htw) tandem mixed category. December 21, 2012 to December 22, 2012 the pair sweated it out for 26 hours giving them the new world record.

On February 21, 2013 at 9:00 am Amelia Shein set out to break the current world record of 25 hours in the U19 womens' heavy weight longest continual row category. Her goal was to not only break the current world record but to row for 48 hours. Amelia set a new world record of 61 hours completing her row on February 23, 2013 at 10:00 pm. Her record not only breaks the U19 htw record but all records in the womens' continual row category and some records in the mens' continual row category also.